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ABSTRACT

Exploring both the meaning of collaboration and the issues associated with it, this paper is divided into five chapters. The first two chapters discuss the need for collaboration and present definitions and issues associated with it. Chapter 3 recounts some of the problems others have identified that are either part of or that affect collaboration between schools and business and industry. In addition, this chapter looks at the advice offered on how to deal with these problems. The relationship between collective bargaining and the collaboration process is developed in the fourth chapter. The collective bargaining model is presented as a way to strengthen and improve the collaborative process. The final chapter reflects briefly on the collective bargaining analogy, presents assumptions that came out of the discussion of collaboration, and discusses the future of collaboration. (LRA)

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COLLABORATION AMONG SCHOOLS AND BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY:

An Analysis of the Problems and Some Suggestions for Improving the Process

by

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and
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Summer 1978

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Susan Wong Rath
Rex Hagans
Summer 1978

PREFACE

We could have approached a discussion of collaboration from a number of perspectives. To cite some examples--

- alternative organizational structures in collaboration
- the appropriateness of program- and policy-level issues in difficult collaborative configurations
- an analysis of levels of collaboration including representation and authority
- assessing the extent to which collaboration is occurring

After our review of the literature, we felt that a necessary first step in analyzing collaboration was to look constructively at the process by which collaborative decisions are (or can be) reached. We believed it was essential to expand the thinking in the area of the collaborative process--something the literature has not yet done. We recognize the importance of the topics listed above and fully acknowledge there are others that need attention. Our focus does not deal with the universe of issues surrounding collaboration but rather address a small and, we believe, significant part of that universe. We hope those interested in collaboration will read on with this understanding as well as turn their own attention at some point to the other elements of the collaboration universe.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, a significant shift has occurred in the relationship among schools, business, labor and government. It is no longer a question of whether schools and the other institutions of the community should work together for the benefit of young people and society. Rather, the current focus is on how to make the relationship among schools, labor, business and government a more effective one in helping young people move from school to work. The problems in establishing and maintaining that relationship are many. Those who are involved in efforts to bring education and work closer together are faced with a mandate to move beyond cooperation to collaboration. The general distinction is that cooperation means that community institutions serve in an advisory capacity to the schools whereas collaboration means they work together with the schools--that there is give and take and shared decision making. (Chapter II, Defining Collaboration, explores the different characteristics of collaboration in greater detail.) The issue facing today's educators and community people is "collaboration." If the learning and earning problems of youth are to be overcome, schools, business, government and labor must work together--they must collaborate.

About this paper. As we approached the broad topic of collaboration among schools and the other major community institutions, some of the questions we used to guide our efforts--and the chapters where the

questions are generally addressed--are:

1. What is meant by collaboration? (Chapter II)
2. What incentives foster collaboration? (Chapter III)
3. What obvious barriers inhibit collaboration? (Chapter III)
4. Are there more subtle barriers or constraints involved in organizational collaboration? (Chapter III)
5. How much of a collaborative effort depends on individual initiative and how much on organizational commitment? (Chapter IV)
6. Is there a mediating role that is needed between education and the business world? (Chapter IV)
7. How could barriers be removed? (Chapter IV)

It is our intent in this paper to explore both the meaning of collaboration and the issues associated with it which emerged as a result of our review of the literature in this area. Following our discussion of definitions and issues, we will focus on the process of collaboration. Here we will attempt to add to the understanding of this process by developing a potential relationship between two previously unrelated areas--collaboration and collective bargaining.

Although the introduction of collective bargaining may surprise some readers, we believe the analogy between collective bargaining and collaboration may offer much that is of value to the collaborative process. It is our belief that in the past twenty years the common stake of the schools, the unions, the government and the business community in the successful transition of the young has become as obvious to all concerned as is the common stake of labor and management

in a healthy, productive economy. At the most general level both involve a process of sharing power between parties with differing specific interests but a common stake in a broad outcome. However, as in the parallel case of labor and management, a way must be found to work out specifics of promoting that common goal without sacrificing important principles or alienating each other. The process for doing that is negotiation. The parallel, then, goes something like this:

1. Collaboration is, in part, a process.
2. That process involves negotiation.
3. That process has received no systematic attention in the literature even though it is crucial to the outcome of any collaborative effort.
4. Collective bargaining is also dependent upon a process that involves negotiations.
5. The collective bargaining process has received considerable attention in the literature, some of which involves identifying and defining key elements in the process.
6. Therefore, we concluded, we should examine the elements of the collective bargaining process to attempt to enrich our understanding of the collaborative process.

Obviously, collaboration is not totally parallel to collective bargaining. But our concern with the process rather than the content of collaboration has led us in search of an analogy that might improve that process. Our concern stems from our review of the literature and from our experience in collaboration.

Much of the work referenced in this paper concerns education and work programs. Even though these programs dominate the discussion of collaboration, this is not meant to suggest that the collaborative

process is limited to education and work. Collaboration between the public education system and other sectors of life has applications for a variety of education programs and for people of all ages. However, it is clear to us that the mandate and motivation for collaborative efforts are definitely present in the education-work arena more strongly than in most others at the present time.

Our position on collaboration. First, we believe in it. Second, we endorse it. Third, we participate in it. At the same time, we recognize that it is a complex process that has yet to be fully understood or described. We agree with Wirtz in his description of the 'program' (what we are calling the content of collaboration) versus the 'process':

> First: the program elements in an effective education-work policy directed at these problems at the school-to-employment gap have now been pretty well marked out.
>
> But second: the process elements that are manifestly essential to the effective administration of these new programs have not been significantly developed. While the programs bridge the "two worlds," the handling of them so far has been left largely in one of these two worlds, education, alone (Wirtz 1975:4).

In view of our commitment to and concern about collaboration, we reviewed the literature in search of others' views on the topic. The next section discusses the need for collaboration and raises some important questions about how--and whether--we can achieve collaboration.

The need for collaboration. William McKnight, Jr., in the Journal of Career Education, stresses a common premise: there should be

collaboration between schools and business and industry.

> Business and industry have every reason to become deeply involved in education--and especially career education. Business people should want to respond to the alarming statistic that in any one year, about two million young people leave formal education lacking skills adequate to enter the labor market at a level commensurate with their academic and intellectual promise. Many leave with no marketable skills whatever. Such fruitless educational effort wastes educational dollars (McKnight 1978:41).

In spite of the proposed value of collaboration, McKnight, like others, recognizes that forming partnerships between education and business and industry is not easy.

> (T)oo seldom are such working partnerships realized. Educators assume business people are too busy. Business people assume educators will think they just want to meddle, if they step forward without invitation (McKnight 1978:38).

Although the time is right for collaboration, according to Gleazer, the difficulties involved in making it happen may be close to insurmountable.

> (Collaboration), although universally applauded in the abstract, has seen little practical application, probably because it requires much from both individuals and institutions...The variables in institutional and individual relationships are so numerous that collaboration may appear to be a near-impossible task. Yet, in spite of the seeming barriers to achieving real collaboration, the times call for it (Gleazer 1977:1).

Peter Horoschak, in his 1971 article entitled "The Reality of Business Education Partnership Programs," cites the work of Sovde (1970) which suggests some reasons why collaboration would be favored by business and industry as well as by the public schools. It may be worthwhile briefly to review the "pros" Sovde identified eight years ago on behalf of collaboration.

From industry's point of view:

1. Business depends on skilled manpower and social stability to survive. Why, then, pay taxes to support schools and then be forced to retrain the graduate, and why pay tax bills for crime and welfare when positive educational programs can reduce both?

2. A well-trained and educated work force will attract industry to an area thereby producing greater tax revenue.

3. Good business management practices could be put toward more efficient allocation of school resources.

4. Pre-eminence in technological development can be retained only with a good educational system.

5. Cooperation of schools will reflect positively on the maintenance of the system of free enterprise.

6. Direct intervention in solving social problems is possible through the schools.

From the educators' point of view:

1. The educational system can keep up with technological change through communication with industry.

2. Business mangement techniques would help school administrators cope with the rising costs of education.

3. Curriculum and instructional techniques are relevant only as long as they relate to urban living and work opportunities.

4. Corporate personnel can be used to enrich the student's learning experience and enhance the vocational guidance program.

5. The business environment should be used to train for working in the private sector of the economy.

6. Industry support would be valuable for in-service training of teachers.

Apart from these benefits to business and industry and to the public schools, Sovde found that "the results of previous attempts to collaborate suggests guarded optimism at best" (Sovde 1970:10-11 as

cited in Horoschak 1971:26-27). School people are suspicious of the intentions of industry, which has confused industry about how to work with schools. Horoschak cites the following as factors inhibiting the school-business partnership: communication problems, lack of initiative on the part of the schools, insufficient authority, the need for strong leadership, the need to focus on a specific project, and the need for involvement of students as well as school staff and business people (Horoschak 1971:28-29).

A survey conducted by The Conference Board in the early 70's describes the earlier role of business--one less demanding than collaboration. Although the conclusion suggested by the results of the survey is optimistic about business people and school people working together, Finley reminds us of the problems involved in establishing that relationship. Looking at this early work from the perspective of our current concern with collaboration, one is struck by "The Proper Role of Business" which is described as follows:

> The key words in defining the roles of business for educators would be supportive, and cooperative. They seek a partnership with business that is not so much a day-to-day working arrangement for most (educators), but rather as a back-up and assurance that (educators) aren't working in isolation (Finley 1973:4).

However, Finley's final statement suggests very generally what might lead to more effective collaboration:

> It seems obvious that before businessmen and educators can fully understand one another and begin to work to improve the system jointly, they must talk to each other (Finley 1973:18). (Emphasis added.)

Talking to each other is an umbrella phrase for the process of collaboration. In Chapter IV, we present a new paradigm for the "process" of collaboration in some detail. At this point, however, we can conclude that collaboration is desirable and, at the same time, difficult to achieve. Let us now see what kinds of questions are being raised about the difficulty of collaborating.

Some questions about collaboration. The spring 1978 edition of the National Manpower Institute newsletter referred to a study funded by the National Institute of Education. At that time, NIE was "...reviewing the Consortium Work-Education Council" (The Work-Education Exchange, 1978:3). NIE wanted the study to answer three questions:

1. Is collaboration possible? The concept of collaboration assumes that the institutions of education, labor, business and others concerned with youth development will find enough common interest in the goal of helping young people to move between education and work that each institution would be willing to submerge some of its own self-interests to accomplish this large goal. Is this really possible or is there a basic conflict between the groups' self-interest that will not allow fruitful collaboration?

2. When collaboration does occur, does it cause institutional change and create linkages that would otherwise not exist? If so, what is the nature of the change?

3. Are benefits for young actually found when collaboration results in institutional change and new linkages? What are those benefits? (The Work-Education Exchange, 1978:3).

Apparently, the problems in collaboration between schools and business and industry are significant enough to cause NIE to ask whether collaboration is even possible. Although the second and third questions assume that is is possible, nobody said it would be easy.

> Involving the community in public schools is a lot like making love to a gorilla. Once you start the process, you can't quit until the gorilla is ready to quit. (Nolan Estes, from remarks at the AASA Convention, Education USA, February 1978:193.)

Beyond the issue of whether collaboration is possible and, if so, what new linkages are created and what benefits for young people occur, we need to be concerned about strengthening the collaborative relationship. Hensley addresses himself to this problem when he asks the following:

1. Who should take the lead in planning for ...implementation?
2. Are the interests of education and business/industry compatible?
3. Can institutionalized educational offerings be coordinated with the opportunities which now exist for work and employment?
4. Do collaborative efforts among leaders in business, industry, and education lead to external control of schooling? (Hensley 1977:16-20.)

Kenneth Hoyt, in a recent paper on "The Concept of Collaboration and Career Education," focuses primarily on the benefits to students, educators, business, labor and industry that can result from collaboration. Resulting from the first two mini-conferences sponsored by USOE's Office of Career Education during 1977-78, the paper also addresses two basic problems about collaboration. The problems which were discussed by the conference participants and which now appear in some detail in the report are:

Problem 1: To what extent is meeting the goal of education as preparation for work a responsibility of the business/labor/industry community?

Problem 2: To what extent are educators willing to share responsibility and authority for preparing students for work with the business/labor/industry community? (Hoyt 1977:7-10.)

Although as Hoyt states, "Some communities have already found ways of solving both of these basic problems," he concludes that "...much remains to be done" (Hoyt 1977:10). What Hoyt suggests we need in order to solve both problems are "...sufficient level of trust, determination, and commitment on both sides" (Hoyt 1977:10). Thus, in order that the benefits from collaboration might be realized, we must solve the problems; to solve the problems, we must understand the process of collaboration.

Walsh advises us that:

> The crucial question concerning collaboration is whether schools will be willing to share policy-making and operational responsibilities with other community organizations and agencies, and whether non-educational organizations and institutions will be willing to assume new responsibilities for educational programs. The answer to this question can be determined only if specific activities are identified which are uniquely suited to 'collaboration' (Walsh 1976:18).

Walsh also points out that the primary distinction between "...community-work education councils and school-community mechanisms that already exist is in the 'process,' i.e., the proposed councils would involve 'collaboration' between institutions and agencies, whereas most existing mechanisms involve merely 'cooperation.' Until specific areas of collaboration are identified, however, this distinction will remain in the realm of semantics" (Walsh 1976:18).

His warning deserves our attention. In the two years since Walsh's paper, we have made progress; but we have not yet fully mastered or fully explicated the process of collaboration. Underlying the questions raised above is the need to better define and describe what it is that we mean by collaboration. As we move ahead in that direction, we will be better able to determine if collaboration is possible, if it creates change, who should be doing it, if it changes who controls schools, the responsibilities of the various agencies, and the roles that educators should play.

Summary. Collaboration is no longer a luxury--especially for those involved in education-and-work. Collaboration is a reality and we must move ahead. If we are to succeed, however, we must understand collaboration; we must look at the problems and then attempt to improve the process. Chapter II presents definitions and characteristics of collaboration; Chapter III discusses the problems; Chapter IV presents a new approach to the process.

Chapter II

DEFINING COLLABORATION

In our review of the literature, we found a number of definitions of collaboration. We examined each definition first to establish what the major ideas were and second to examine the overall characteristics that are associated with collaboration. The first part of the chapter presents the definitions and the major ideas. The second part attempts to synthesize the ideas and discusses some themes that emerge.

Most of those who are writing about collaboration come from the education-and-work field. Thus, most of the definitions refer in some way to education-and-work programs or issues. Although we believe collaboration can and should go beyond the focus on young people and work, we recognize that the mandate to collaborate is stronger in the education-and-work area than perhaps in any other area and that collaborative efforts in that field are great in number and have a long history.

The Definitions

The six definitions presented here illustrate the growing complexity of our understanding of what is meant by collaboration. Each definition also contributes to the key features of collaboration which appear at the end of this chapter.

Definition 1: McClain and Sockol in Community Education/Work Collaboration: A Massachusetts Perspective begin with a general discussion of the nature of an education/work collaboration. They define it in a general way as follows:

> Community education/work collaboration...is characterized by arrangements of members of a community to facilitate the transition of young people between institutional education and whatever is to follow (e.g., work or further education) (McClain and Sockol 1978:1).

A major point in McClain and Sockol's definition then, emphasizes what members of a community do or what they 'arrange' for the young people in their schools.

Definition 2: The notion of collaboration becomes more specific when we look at a definition presented by a participant in one of USOE's miniconferences on "The Conceptualization of Collaboration." Dr. Edwin Herr offered the following definition which was accepted by the conference participants:

> Collaboration is shared commitment to and responsibility for career education learner outcomes which involves both clear psychological and tangible investments among participants (Notes from the Miniconference No. 1, 1977:3).

In Herr's definition, we have shared commitment and responsibility as characteristics of those involved in collaboration. In addition, the commitment and responsibility is tied to learner outcomes and associated with psychological and tangible investments by those involved in collaboration.

Definition 3: Kenneth Hoyt offers a definition which distinguishes between cooperation and collaboration. The primary distinction he makes is that collaboration means investment in policies and operational practices; cooperation does not.

> Collaboration is a term that implies the parties involved share responsibility and authority for basic policy decision-making...cooperation, on the other hand, is a term that assumes two or more parties, each with separate and autonomous programs, agree to work together in making all such programs more successful. To 'cooperate' with another agency or organization carries no implication that one either can, or should, affect its policies or operational practices (Hoyt as cited in Walsh 1977:91-92).

Hoyt (like Herr) includes shared responsibility. He adds the idea that authority for policy decision-making is also shared.

Definition 4: Another view of the characteristics associated with collaboration is presented by Mary Ann Millsap in her AERA paper, "The State Capacity Building Grants Program in Dissemination: The Federal Evaluation Perspective." Although her's is not strictly a definition of collaboration, Millsap identifies some important characteristics of collaboration:

1. Each party's decision to become involved in the joint venture results from choice; participation is voluntary.

2. All parties have an equal stake in the activities undertaken. Usually this means that each party is contributing the same amount of money or is investing the same amount of time or effort.

3. All parties have an equal stake in the consequences of the activities, good or ill. In collaborating in writing a book, for example, each author shares the consequences of royalties, if any, of fame or notoriety, and of any inaccuracy in the text.

4. Within the process of collaborating, decision-making is shared, or, stated in the reverse, each party has veto power over what is undertaken.

5. Each party is dependent upon the others for the accomplishment of the activities--that each, on its own, could not accomplish all the work.

6. Perhaps not an essential element, but still critical, is personal interaction among the parties, some amount of frequent face-to-face contact.

7. Lastly, there is a common understanding of expectations, of what each party is to do, including knowledge of the constraints or limitations under which each party is operating (Millsap 1978:3-4).

The major ideas from Millsap include voluntary participation, having an equal stake in activities and consequences, shared decision-making, interdependence regarding accomplishing work, personal interaction, and common understanding of obligations and constraints.

Millsap's characteristics of collaboration could be called "ground rules" for collaboration. The characteristics are both descriptive and prescriptive. For example, having an equal stake in the consequences of the activities both describes what can (or should) happen in collaboration and suggests the way in which collaboration should occur.

Definition 5: Perhaps the most often cited definition of collaboration is one developed by Paul Barton of the National Manpower Institute. His definition is:

> A process of collaboration means the participation of the representatives of the important institutions and sectors of the community that have the responsibility, resources, and

influence to deal with the whole of the transition to regular adult employment. It means an attempt to accomplish jointly what could not be achieved singly, and a whole that is larger than the sum of its parts.

A 'collaborative process' as used here, is identified by:

- being an organized activity within an agreed-upon policy for its conduct;
- the participation of representatives of education, business, labor, parents, the voluntary and service organization sector, the public, students...or at least a sufficient number of the above to provide the expectation of significant achievement;
- an involvement in the improvement of the transition arrangements rather than the rest of the group being 'advisory' to any one of the represented institutions or sectors; and
- the development of, or working on the development of, an agenda of substantive actions, a prioritizing of the items on the agenda, and planning toward actually carrying out the agenda (Barton 1977 as cited in Interagency Collaboration 1978:5).

The emphasis added in the original identifies the concepts Barton wishes to emphasize. Barton stresses active participation as well as who should be involved. Under 'collaborative process,' he begins to establish a framework in which collaboration should take place. The content of collaboration--the specific items that might appear on the agenda--are left to the discretion of the participants. Unlike the problems associated with collaboration (see Chapter III), specific topics or issues are not mentioned.

Definition 6: Another view of collaboration is proposed by Ferrin and Arbeiter in Bridging the Gap: A Collection of Education-to-Work Linkages. In their report, Ferrin and Arbeiter propose that

education-to-work linkages can be described in terms of a five-stage collaboration continuum. The continuum ranges from separation (where the school has no contact with business and industry) to integration (where education and work become a single process). The definitions of the four key categories are as follows (the category of separation was omitted because no programs under consideration fell in this category):

1. Community: (Programs) primarily intended to open a dialogue and an effective exchange of information between the worlds of education and work. The intention is not so much to effect change as to influence perceptions and attitudes.

2. Participation: (Programs) in this category move toward facilitating and fostering recommendations and advice made by one party to the other.

3. Substitution: These are programs that periodically replace the school setting or the teacher with the workplace and the supervisor.

4. Integration: These are programs aimed toward making education and work a single process in which the individual learns and earns simultaneously. In our specialized society, this type of process normally affects a limited number of individuals in special situations (Ferrin and Arbeiter 1975:2-3).

Although the continuum is obviously meant to describe education-and-work programs, the notion of stages or phases of collaboration is generally useful. It suggests, for example, that the process of collaboration might involve moving through stages similar to those associated with programs. Thus, collaboration itself might begin communication and over time move toward integration. The important idea for collaboration is that neither the process nor the outcomes always remain at one level--collaboration shifts and its outcomes shift.

Summary. The six definitions specify a number of elements that one might hope to find in a collaborative effort. Overall, it would appear that there is sufficient interest in and concern for collaboration to bring about expanded definition(s) and identification of more key features or characteristics. They key features of collaboration mentioned so far are impressive in number and in scope. A synthesized version of the definitional features based on the six definitions is presented here to illustrate the scope of what has been emphasized in literature.

Key Features of Collaboration

1. Voluntary and active participation
2. Psychological and tangible investments
   - 2.1 having an equal stake
3. Sharing among collaborators
   - 3.1 commitment and responsibility for learner outcomes
   - 3.2 responsibility and authority for policy making
   - 3.3 decision making
   - 3.4 interaction
   - 3.5 a common understanding of expectations
   - 3.6 making arrangements for young people
   - 3.7 interdependence in carrying out activities
4. Organizing collaborative meetings
   - 4.1 using an agenda
   - 4.2 prioritizing agenda items
   - 4.3 planning how to carry out the agenda

In our paraphrasing and reordering of the key features, we find that much of the emphasis (and deservedly so) is on the sharing which must go on at the collaboration table. This "sharing" is particularly important because collaborators are in some sense outside their organizational boundaries. The emphasis on sharing may reflect the need to improve our understanding of interagency collaboration. More importantly, perhaps, sharing together with organizing (item 4) points to the importance of developing and using some identifiable form of collaborative process. We agree with the emphasis given to sharing and organizing and we endorse the need to improve the mechanisms for achieving both.

Finally, a simple word about an issue which we view as "semi-definitional"--does collaboration thrive best if it is policy oriented and shuns specific projects or if it uses a specific project focus to build the relationships. We have only biases not the definitive answer. Our feeling is that for multiple sector collaboration it is best to take the first approach and for one-to-one collaboration the second. However, both multiple sector and multiple organization collaboration which focus on policy are greatly enhanced by the existence of one-to-one collaborations focusing on specific projects. The ideal, in our opinion, is a mix.

Before we move to our discussion of the collaborative process (Chapter IV), we would like to briefly review some of the problems and issues other have raised about collaboration to see whether

they too suggest that the collaboration process needs greater attention than it has received so far.

Chapter 3

PROBLEMS AND ADVICE ON COLLABORATION

In this section, we will recount some of the problems others have identified that are either part of or that affect collaboration between schools and business and industry. Following our discussion of the problems, we will look at some of the advice offered on how to deal with these problems.

The Problems

According to Burt and Lessinger, there are characteristics inherent in the collaboration process that can certainly influence and perhaps impede the efforts of those involved. These characteristics, which constitute a framework within which collaboration takes place, are as follows:

On the education side, school administrators tend to--

1. Be confused as to what they want from industry.
2. Lack knowledge of how industry is organized or how to approach industry.
3. Be suspicious of the motivations of industry in working with schools.
4. Fear that industry groups will become special interest pressure groups.
5. Be unwilling to provide staff to work with industry in developing cooperative relationships.
6. Place too much emphasis on advisory committees at local, state and national levels as the sole technique for achieving industry-education cooperation.
7. Lack understanding of the role of the instructor in achieving industry-education cooperation.

8. Fail to provide central office coordination of industry participation in the individual schools of the school system.

Burt and Lessinger add that industry participation in school programs can become diffused and relatively impotent because supervisory staff at both central office and individual schools are jealous of each other's perogatives in establishing industry contacts. In addition, state officials, national educational organizations and the U.S. Office of Education have not provided realistic guidelines and adequate staff to enlist and encourage industry participation in school matters.

On the side of business and industry, there is often--

1. Confusion concerning the mission of public education, school organization, and how to work effectively with school people.

2. Unwillingness to make long-range commitments to volunteer services to schools, thus creating among educators a sense of impermanency and resulting self-seeking motivations on the part of industry.

3. Disillusionment when school officials take a cautious approach to industry-initiated cooperative programs.

4. Lack of planned organization, assignment of staff, and budgeted funds to effectively channel and implement the desire to be involved in work with schools.

5. Lack of knowledge and leadership as to what may rightfully be demanded, as a matter of public policy, from the public schools (Burt and Lessinger, 1970, as cited in Walsh 1977:11-112).

This analysis suggested that there are significant problems in perspective and understanding on the part of both educators and business and industry. The problems both precede and occur simultaneously with collaboration.

On a different level, Hensley has identified eight "...potential barriers to increased interaction." In a general way, the barriers begin to address the problems of the process of collaboration as well as to suggest some of the content which needs to be addressed during the collaboration process.

1. State and local people involved in career education frequently do not seek out the help of business and industry early in the project.

2. Business people have trouble participating in the schools because of certification and credential requirements.

3. Career prospects are hard to identify.

4. The competencies seen by business and industry as necessary for work are often unclear to those in education.

5. Greater understanding is needed of security, safety and insurance-related problems.

6. There is lack of continuity in communications between schools and business and industry.

7. There is never enough time; there is never enough money.

8. There is a gap between the requirements of business and industry and the objectives of the school (Hensley 1978:28-30).

In addition to the more personal problems cited by Burt and Lessinger, we have the professional problems identified by Hensley. Problems such as certification and credentialing requirements; identifying career prospects; clarifying competencies needed for work; explaining security, safety and insurance-related needs; and narrowing the gap between what business and industry want and what the schools want can all be viewed as agenda items for collaboration. In that sense, these problems address a form of 'content' of collaboration. They suggest some of the things that those involved in collaboration need to be talking about.

Another problem identified by Hensley--one which he considers to be primary in the relations between education and the community--is "...interpreting outcomes to the community" (Hensley 1978:33). Although Hensley associates this problem primarily with implementing mandated legislation in the schools, collaborators, we may assume, must also interpret their activities and outcomes to the community.

In an earlier paper, Hensley presented six problem areas discussed at the Education Commission of the States 1976 annual meeting. Similar in many ways to the potential barriers listed above, the problem areas also suggest topics to be addressed through the process of collaboration. The six problem areas are:

1. Society expects the schools to do the entire job of preparing people for the world of work.
2. There is little agreement as to what skills, attitudes, and experiences best prepare persons for work and living.
3. Schools tend to emphasize either career learning or liberal arts rather than a blend or infusion of the two.
4. There are limited opportunities for developing new skills and attitudes after one leaves the formal educational system.
5. Given the existing financial problems faced by our educational system, it appears unlikely that any system will be in a position to do much toward problems of preparing persons for work.
6. Our society has a tendency to launch efforts toward solving problems of careers and life preparedness before problems are carefully identified and defined (Hensley 1977:20-22).

Although the problem areas begin to touch on some of the issues involved in the process of collaboration, what Hensley and others

have identified as problems are closely associated with the content or topics that collaborators must decide or resolve. Thus, we know more at this point about what those involved in collaboration need to talk about than we do about how best to do that talking. In the process of decision making and attempting to achieve resolution, having an understanding of the process of collaboration becomes critically important. An adequate understanding of the process can determine whether or not problems such as those identified by Hensley are properly addressed.

Hensley's conclusion reinforces our belief in the importance of understanding the process of collaboration--"Concensus among decision makers is the key, and representatives of business, industry and education are central participants in the process" (Hensley 1977:36). (Emphasis added.) This brief reference to the need for consensus among participants in the collaborative process illustrates what we think deserves greater attention and increased understanding. That is, how does one achieve consensus--how does one negotiate effectively in the collaboration process?

Another view of the problems associated with collaboration is presented by Richard Ungerer in a recent paper titled Work and Service Experience for Youth. Ungerer develops the idea of two kinds of constraints that affect both educators and employers--attitudinal constraints and practical constraints. Both kinds of constraints are similar to the ideas presented by Burt and Lessinger and by Hensley.

The Advice

Ungerer suggests that one way of addressing constraints is through the establishment of collaborative councils which should include leaders from education as well as from business and industry. He identifies three roles for the councils, each of which suggests an approach to achieving collaboration. The first role is brokering and technical assistance; the second is policy development and advocacy; the third is coordination and management (Ungerer 1978:24). In these three roles, one can see the broad outline for a process approach to collaboration. By defining the roles that the councils are to play, Ungerer can be said to be focusing on the framework within which particular content issues can be resolved.

A similar suggestion comes from Hensley. He recommends that "...proposed levels of collaborative activities must be established beforehand to determine what outcomes are possible before serious discussions begin" (Hensley 1978:26). By proposing levels of activities, Hensley, like Ungerer, is recognizing the need to define what role is to be played by those involved in collaboration as well as how that role can effect outcomes.

McKnight suggests some specific roles businesses might play in working with schools in order to help circumvent the problems in forming working partnerships. His suggestions are:

1. Help obtain supporting legislation.
2. Recognize and fully support collaborative education opportunities.

3. Provide employment experience for business orientation for local teachers.

4. Support the school's guidance, placement and follow-up services.

5. Speak out about business and tell it like it is (McKnight 1978:38-41).

His list includes activities businesses can do and attitudes businesses might hold which would support collaboration. In that sense, McKnight's suggested roles apply primarily to a situation where schools and business and industry are ready and willing to work together.

An even more concrete approach is recommended by Sampieri. He suggests both organizational approaches and personal techniques to use in coming to grips with the problems of collaboration. His advice is offered to educators; similar advice would be appropriate for those from business and industry. Sampieri advocates following six rules under the organizational approach. These are:

1. When you consider involving an institution in a partnership, do not assume that you need not plan your effort.

2. Understand clearly the primary purpose of the proposed linkage.

3. Diagnose the characteristics and possible motivation of your prospective partners.

4. Develop a classification system that will help the educational management team plan with and respond to various members in the partnership.

5. Distinguish between 'initiating' and 'maintaining' partnerships when developing or re-evaluating your management plan.

6. Do not attempt to initiate a partnership unless an adequate number of school personnel can be delegated sufficient responsibility (Sampieri 1975:47-52).

In addition to this organizational advice, Sampieri offers some personal advice on how to sell a program to someone in the community. For example, be persistent, keep your sales pitch short, don't try to close a deal on the phone, don't compete for lunch checks, and so on. Thus, the educator is getting some advice on how to relate more effectively on a one-to-one basis with people in business and industry. Again, similar advice might be helpful to business and industry people.

Summary of the Problems and Advice. We have reviewed the characteristics of educators and of people in business, industry and labor that tend to disrupt collaboration. We have looked at some of the barriers and problems that may make collaboration more difficult. We have touched briefly on advice to those involved in collaboration ranging from the role organizations should play to personal advice on how to collaborate. Much of the literature emphasizes the difficulty of collaborating and proposes very general guidelines for promoting more effective collaboration.

The problems appear to be more fully developed at this point than the solutions. We think therefore that a better and broader understanding of the process of collaboration is very much needed. Before we present the parallels we believe exist between collective bargaining

and the collaboration process, we will discuss one final document which services as a significant transition between the problems and guidelines presented earlier and our discussion of the collaboration process in the next chapter.

Principles for Agreement in Collaboration

In a recent paper prepared by Miguel, Coleman and Wasson at the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE), the authors present what they call "principles for agreement" which are designed to help those involved in collaboration. The principles cover four areas: communication, acceptance, commitment and success. They appear to follow the chain of interaction which occurs throughout collaboration beginning with communication and culminating with success. Under each principle, the authors raise a number of issues and offer their recommendations on how best to proceed in order to achieve successful collaboration. The issues raised are significant. They address the important notion of the process of collaboration as a complex phenomenon demanding specific skills on the part of the participants. These skills suggested here in the form of issues, are similar to those we will discuss in Chapter IV of this paper. The issues associated with each principle are:

1. Communication
   - Issue 1.1 Who enters the discussion
   - Issue 1.2 Where to begin
   - Issue 1.3 Focus of discussion
   - Issue 1.4 Language

2. Acceptance
   - Issue 1.5 Definition of the problem
   - Issue 1.6 Recognition of self-interests
   - Issue 1.7 Agreeing to disagree
   - Issue 1.8 Placing parameters around expectations

3. Commitment
   - Issue 1.9 Seeking commitment
   - Issue 1.10 Seeking levels of commitment
   - Issue 1.11 Identifying commitment
   - Issue 1.12 Maintaining commitment

4. Success
   - Issue 1.13 Allowing adequate planning time
   - Issue 1.14 Establishing priorities
   - Issue 1.15 Establishing criteria for success
   - Issue 1.16 Establishing accountability (Miguel, Coleman and Wasson 1978: unnumbered).

The emphasis throughout the principles of agreement and the associated issues is distinctly content-free. The authors have focused entirely on the process of collaboration and have contributed significantly to a better understanding of some key decisions that must be made about the process. Their concept of collaboration extends all the way from who is to collaborate through how those involved in collaboration know whether they have succeeded. The issues, then, take us from beginning collaborative efforts to the completion of any particular project or program.

Conclusion

There are numerous other sources we could cite on the problems, issues, procedures and advice associated with collaboration of schools and business and industry. However, the information contained in the preceeding pages should be sufficient to demonstrate that:

1. Many of those concerned with the topic of collaboration highlight the problems and constraints, and in some cases, question whether or not collaboration can be accomplished between education and the business/labor/government sectors.

2. Closely aligned with the discussion of problems is advice offered to educators and representatives of business and industry to help make collaboration possible.

3. Apart from the recent work by NCRVE there is little in the literature that analyzes how to conduct the process of collaboration or that attempts to develop fully a framework within which those involved in collaboration could begin to work together effectively.

For the purposes of this paper, it is the third item which is of primary concern. In an attempt to further our understanding of how to overcome the difficulties and achieve the potential benefits of collaboration, we believe that the process needs to be examined from another perspective. Basing our next chapter in part on the understanding gained from our review of the literature and in part on our own experience in collaboration, we hope to shed some light on an underlying mode of operation which we believe permeates many collaborative efforts--namely, collective bargaining.

Chapter IV

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND THE COLLABORATION PROCESS

Introduction

The elements of the collaboration process can be viewed as similar to the elements of the collective bargaining/negotiations process. Dealing with problems and issues such as those discussed earlier may be easier if one approaches the collaboration table with some of the same expectations, knowledge and tools used by professional negotiators and others involved in collective bargaining.

We are not suggesting that the match between collective bargaining and collaboration is complete or in any way perfect. First, the roles in collaboration are less clearly defined than the roles in collective bargaining. Second, collective bargaining places people in adversarial positions; collaboration may do so occasionally but only when an issue cannot be resolved. Third, collective bargaining is focused on a set of relatively clear-cut issues such as salary, fringe benefits, working conditions, and so on. The issues in collaboration are policy or program issues and not as clear-cut. Fourth, collective bargaining primarily addresses the needs of employers and employees. Collaboration, on the other hand, has to address the needs of multiple organizations and individuals.

Recognizing these differences, we remain convinced of the value in borrowing some of the key concepts and terms from collective bargaining

and applying them to collaboration. It is our hope that, by drawing a relationship between two previously unrelated processes, both individuals and organizations involved in collaboration may find some meaning that is useful. We do not advocate adapting the entire model; we do hope the reader will recognize some activities already underway and perhaps see some mechanisms that might be helpful in the future.

Levels of Collaboration

Before we discuss collective bargaining, we would like to say a bit about levels of collaboration. In different collaborative efforts, one is likely to find a different configuration of organizations represented. At the same time, one could find different kinds of representation. A level of collaboration, then, is determined by the organizational configuration and the nature of the representation. Considering the possible variations, there are obviously many levels of collaboration. For the purposes of illustration, we have identified three main levels which represent fairly common configurations and kinds of representation. These are:

Level 1: One-to-one collaboration
Configuration: two organizations
Representation: persons representing each organization

Level 2: Multiple organization collaboration
Configuration: three or more organizations
Representation: persons representing each organization

Level 3: Multiple sector collaboration
Configuration: three or more organizations
Representation: persons representing societal sectors (e.g., education and labor) rather than organizations

Although the levels are not fully developed, they serve to point out that collaboration changes (and therefore the collaboration process may need to change) depending on the configuration and the kind of representation.

In the discussion that follows, we have not attempted to adapt each concept in collective bargaining to each level of collaboration. Although there are differences, the main purpose here is to present the collective bargaining model, which we believe has merit at all levels of collaboration.

The Collective Bargaining Model

In this chapter we will present selected terms and definitions used in collective bargaining and relate these to the collaboration process. The terms, definitions and related discussion appear in four sections:

1. Collective bargaining
2. Elements of the Process
3. Roles in the Process
4. Products/Outcomes of the Process

Collective bargaining is presented first in that it serves as the context for all other terms and definitions--everything presented in the sections following "collective bargaining" occurs within the collective bargaining process.

Collective Bargaining

Definition: a process whereby employees as a group and their employers make offers and counter-offers for the purpose of

reaching a mutually acceptable agreement and the execution of a written document incorporating such an agreement. This term implies good faith on the part of both sides. (This and all other definitions are taken from Wildman 1970:24-25.)

Obviously, the collaboration process between educators and business people is not a process involving employees and employers. If one were to substitute "school representatives" and "business, labor and government representatives" for employees and employers, one can see that the process of negotiation (including but not limited to making offers and counter-offers) applies. The concept of give-and-take in the context of collaboration is an important one. Collaborators need to be prepared to offer alternatives and to compromise. That can mean literally preparing a series of alternatives prior to a formal meeting so that the process of collaboration does not depend entirely on the acceptance or rejection of one idea. The same is true about compromise. Knowing in advance when and where you are prepared to compromise--analyzing the issues to determine those which are negotiable and those which are not--needs to be done by all involved in collaboration is the objective to reach a "mutually acceptable agreement."

Although the minutes of meetings may in some instances constitute a formal agreement, when major decisions are reached and commitments are made, it may be advisable for the protection and future of both groups to formalize those decisions and commitments in a separate document. More importantly, collaboration as well as collective bargaining implies "good faith on the part of both sides." This

suggests that a distinction needs to be made between exploratory discussion and a decision to act or take a policy position. That distinction needs to be made clear to all involved. If and when a shift occurs from exploratory discussion to taking action, that shift needs to be clearly recognized and the associated responsibilities and commitments then need to be publicly agreed upon.

The key points, then, for those engaged in collaboration, would appear to be:

- negotiating, including making offers and counter-offers
- reaching a mutually agreeable agreement
- executing a written document
- distinguishing between exploratory discussion and collaborative action
- collaborating in good faith

With these points in mind, we will now explore some of the elements, roles and outcomes that are part of collective bargaining.

Elements of the Process

In this section, we will discuss four procedures that are generally understood to be mechanisms for achieving resolution and for moving ahead in the collective bargaining process. The four procedures or elements are mediation, arbitration, consultation and crisis bargaining.

Mediation. The definition of mediation is as follows:

> Definition: informal attempt by a third party to help in the settlement of an employment dispute through advice or other suggestion but without specific public recommendation for settlement.

In collaboration as well as in collective bargaining, there may be times when a third party is needed to facilitate the resolution of differences. The third party may or may not be part of the collaborative effort depending on the issue and the circumstances. Having someone fill this role may be particularly helpful during the initial stages of collaboration when issues are being defined and objectives need to be set. One might use a third party to help determine the content for the collaboration process, assuming there is general agreement about working together. At any point during collaboration, however, it could be helpful to have someone who is not in the thick of it, so to speak, both to advise and offer suggestions. One of the key words here is "informal." Although the person who takes on the role of mediator may do so very formally either as part of the collaborative group or as a consultant, he or she is performing technical assistance for the group and not developing binding recommendations.

The key ideas in mediation for those involved in collaboration seem to be:

- getting informal help (i.e., technical assistance versus decision-making)
- using a third party

- getting advice and suggestions
- using mediation to explore alternatives rather than to resolve issues fully which occurs via other mechanisms

Arbitration. The definition of arbitration in collective bargaining is as follows:

> Definition: a method of settling disputes through recourse to an impartial third party....Arbitration may be binding if agreed to by the parties or advisory when the arbitrator is without the authority to issue a final and binding award. Arbitration may be used either 1) to settle grievances under an already negotiated agreement or 2) to decide what the terms and conditions of a new collective agreement will be.

Like mediation, arbitration is usually done by an "impartial third party." Unlike mediation, arbitration has resolution of conflict as its goal. In both instances, the process of collaboration may be able to borrow the method of using an outsider either to provide advice and suggestions or to make decisions. Considering the constraints and the problems identified in the collaboration literature, it would seem reasonable that disagreements would occur and that the resolution of these disagreements might not always be possible without special kinds of assistance. If those involved in collaboration were to establish a mechanism early in their efforts whereby a person to serve as a third party could either be on board or called in, recourse to a problem-solving mechanism would be in place.

From collective bargaining's idea of arbitration we have:

- reinforcement of the use of an impartial third party

- establishment of the use of this third party as one of the ground rules for collaboration
- the option of having the arbitrator's decision either binding or not binding

In both mediation and arbitration, the third party role is crucial. One of the real strengths of multiple sector collaboration is that this role is often built in. Business and labor for example, can often "mediate" differences between school and government. Recognition that on various issues there will be a "neutral sector" or sectors can be turned into a real plus for collaborative efforts.

Consultation. Consultation in collective bargaining is defined as follows:

> Definition: an obligation on the part of an employer to consult the employee organization on particular issues before taking action on them.

Consultation might also be seen as a ground rule for collaboration. Similar in some ways to the ground rules by Millsap presented earlier, consultation suggests that those who sit at the collaboration table need, in many cases, to have the opportunity to gain proper authorization from their respective organizations before proceeding. In collaboration, the extent of the authority given to those who are participating varies. Thus, the process of collaboration may bog down when some are able to commit their organization to action and others are not. However, it should be recognized that there is also value in having a "buffer" between top level officials in the planning and discussion of sensitive issues. Those at lower levels

may well be more "free" to examine alternatives and ways to make them work. Although the definition as presented concerns employers consulting employee organizations, one can easily transpose the idea such that employers or employees must consult with the organizations before taking action. Consultation, then, offers the following to our understanding of collaboration.

- awareness of employee-employer relationships and obligations
- awareness of differing authority among members
- the need for a mechanism to promote decision making during collaboration which takes into account the varying degrees of authority.

Crisis Bargaining. Within collective bargaining, crisis bargaining is defined as follows:

> Definition: when collective bargaining takes place under the threat of imminent strike deadlines, it is referred to as 'crisis bargaining' and is to be distinguished from extended negotiations in which both parties have ample time to present and discuss their positions.

Collaborators don't strike; however, they can threaten to withdraw and they do face imminent deadlines. Working together under the threat of such deadlines (for example, when a collaborative proposal is due in the mail the next day; when the school superintendent needs letters of commitment from all organizations involved in collaboration by the end of the week; and so on), the process of collaboration can be exceedingly difficult. Our discussion of the roles in the next section may provide some options to facilitate crisis bargaining. Even if our readers conclude that those roles do not apply, it remains important to know in advance of a crisis

situation how the group intends to proceed. The key points from crisis bargaining, then, appear to be:

- collaboration is different when the group faces an imminent deadline or when someone threatens to withdraw
- special procedures are needed to facilitate "crisis collaboration"
- some specific roles may need to be identified for this situation as well as for others

Roles in the Process

The roles we will discuss in this section are the negotiating unit, the bargaining agent, management perogatives and the fact-finding board. Although these roles obviously do not correspond directly to those involved in collaboration nor do they cover all of the roles in either collective bargaining or collaboration, they do suggest ways to enhance the process of collaboration. We are not suggesting a direct transfer; we are suggesting that some similarities exist both in the processes and in the roles.

Negotiating Unit. The definition of a negotiating unit is as follows:

> Definition: a group of employees recognized by the employer as appropriate representatives of an organization for purposes of collective negotiation.

Like collaboration, collective bargaining is extremely conscious of authority and who represents whom. In the process of collaboration, representatives may change. When this occurs, it may be important for the group as a whole to have a process whereby replacements or

new members are recognized as "appropriate representatives of an organization" or of a societal sector such as labor. The formality associated with collective bargaining may be more than collaboration needs. But the absence of any formal structure may increase the difficulty in collaboration.

The main idea coming from the role of negotiating units in collective bargaining is:

- the need for a process to establish the appropriateness of organizational representatives

Bargaining Agent. Wildman's definition of bargaining agent is:

> Definition: organization recognized by the employer as the exclusive representative of all employees in a negotiating unit for purposes of collective negotiations.

Similar in many ways to the negotiating unit, the use of a bargaining agent serves to narrow the focus of the bargaining process through legitimizing an organization to represent employees. The focusing of authority and the identification of representatives may have some application in collaboration as well. It is a theme that appears often in the collective bargaining definitions which suggests that it is an important aspect of organizing professional negotiations. The same may be true for the negotiations which occur throughout the process of collaboration. This term and those discussed earlier suggest that structure is essential if the process is to occur effectively.

The definition of bargaining agent tell

- a procedure is needed officially to recognize individuals and organizations involved in collaboration
- in some instances, groups may need to consolidate and select a representative
- having a workable structure is part of facilitating the process of collaboration

Management Prerogatives. The term "management prerogatives" is defined to mean:

> Definition: the right reserved to management which may be expressly noted as such in the collective agreement.

Let us substitute "organizations involved in collaboration" for "management." What this definition is suggesting, then, is that all organizations who agree to collaborate may also wish to reserve rights concerning some aspect of the collaborative process or its content. Addressing this issue openly may, in the long run, improve the process of collaboration. If a school has certain policies which prohibit students, or, for that matter, staff from becoming involved in certain activities, this "right" may be important information for those involved in the collaborative process to know. Rather than have important items which may influence the direction of collaboration surface at random over time, the concept of management prerogatives suggests these items be dealt with in generaly early in the forming of the group and then again in specific terms related to each particular problem or issue. Thus, from management prerogatives we are able to extrapolate the following:

- individual as well as organizational rights should be identified

- the identification process should not be haphazard but rather a deliberate activity that is part of the collaboration process.

Fact-Finding Board. A "fact-finding board" is defined as:

> Definition: a group of individuals appointed to investigate and report the facts in an employment dispute. Frequently, the group will be charged with making recommendations for settlement.

Within the group responsible for collaboration, one can easily envision subgroups being formed to investigate and report on particular issues. Depending on the nature of the problem, the subgroup may or may not be members of the collaboration group. The description of a fact-finding board suggests that those involved in collaboration may wish to:

- identify issues that need special attention and ask individuals to work on those issues
- share the responsibility for investigating and reporting on major topics among members and non-members.

Products/Outcomes of the Process

The terms and definitions that are part of the world of collective bargaining begin to identify what we are calling "products/outcomes" in addition to defining the elements of the process and the associated roles. In this section, we have selected four terms for discussion--agreement, ratification, living document and grievance procedure. Again, these products/outcomes do not cover the full range of possibilities, either in collective bargaining or collaboration. But they do serve to illustrate the kinds of products/outcomes that might be appropriate for those involved in the process of collaboration.

Agreement. Wildman has defined agreement to mean:

> Definition: a written agreement between an employer and an employee organization, usually for a definite term, defining conditions of employment...(including) rights of employees and the employee organization and the procedure to be followed in settling disputes or handling issues that arise during the life of the agreement.

Altering the definition to reflect the conditions of collaboration, one might substitute 'representatives of all organizations involved in collaboration' for 'employer' and 'employee organizations.' This suggests that individuals chosen by their organizations to be part of a collaborative process need to have their rights and the rights of their respective organizations clearly spelled out. In any collaborative effort, there is the potential for disagreement among representatives about the nature of the collaborative effort. When those involved in collaboration are attempting to reach agreement on an issue, it would be helpful to have procedures available to help resolve the problem. The concept of needing a procedure in the form of a written agreement defining responsibilities and rights in collaboration and having a mechanism in place to revise collaborative conditions could serve to strengthen collaboration itself.

Translating the concept of agreement from collective bargaining to collaboration suggests:

- organizational representatives need to establish a formal understanding (a written agreement) among themselves concerning what can and cannot occur in collaboration.
- the collaborative group may wish to decide on the kinds of commitment it believes is necessary for members of that group (e.g., number of days delegated to working on

the collaborative process, extent of financial commitment to support the collaborative efforts, and so on).

Ratification. The definition of the term ratification is as follows:

> Definition: the formal approval of a newly negotiated agreement by vote of the organization members affected or the school board.

Just as agreement is defined to mean something determined by the collaborators that is formal and in writing, ratification is also a formal and public process. In terms of collaboration, agreement is the outcome of the negotiations among organizational representatives during collaboration; ratification is the outcome associated with taking any major decision reached by the collaborative group back to each organization. Implied in ratification is the formal approval of the sponsoring organizations. The group may vote to formalize an agreement on that which they have negotiated (e.g., program objectives; future organizational roles in the collaborative process; and so on). This agreement would then be submitted to each organization involved in collaboration, where appropriate, for ratification. Overall, ratification in collaboration can mean:

- obtaining formal agreement by the collaboration group on all major issues
- submitting that agreement for ratification to key persons in the sponsoring organizations
- insuring that there is public commitment (i.e., agreement and ratification) on the part of the individuals and the organizations before major actions are taken.

Living Document. A living document in collective bargaining means:

> Definition: the belief that the terms of an agreement should be subject to review and renegotiation by the parties if conditions change or unforeseen events come about, despite the absence of a reopening clause.

The idea of a living document constitutes a formal recognition of the uncertainties which can significantly alter any plan or agreement. It says, in effect, be prepared to expect the unexpected. It puts in place an acknowledgment that the agreement reached last month which is supposed to hold for one year may need to be reviewed and revised using some of the processes described earlier based on events not currently known. In collaboration, where conditions are constantly shifting, it may be critical to have a means available such that the changes and unforeseen events can be dealt with openly and effectively. By adopting the idea of a living document and developing some steps which would provide for the renegotiation of an agreement, both individuals and organizations involved in collaboration might find it easier to manage change. Having procedures in place first to obtain formal agreement and second to promote ratification, one could activate those procedures at any point within the concept of a living document. The three together (i.e., agreement, ratification and living document) constitute a set of products/outcomes that both formally acknowledge what is to be done and provide mechanisms for revision when necessary. A living document, then, in collaboration means that:

- there is formal recognition of the possible need to revise agreements
- change is part of the process rather than a totally disruptive influence
- procedures to support agreement, ratification and a living document could reduce the uncertainties about what is to be done through collaboration as well as the uncertainty produced by unforeseen events.

Grievance Procedure. Wildman's definition of a grievance procedure is as follows:

> Definition: a formal plan set forth in a collective agreement which provides for the adjustment of grievances through discussions at progressively higher levels of authority and management and the employee organization.

Again, in collective bargaining we have a formal plan to resolve grievances. In collaboration, we typically do not. In spite of the many problems and constraints discussed earlier, some of which could certainly promote "grievances" by members of the collaboration group, we have not yet acknowledged the need to address these situations openly and to provide recourse for collaborators who consider themselves aggrieved. We do not believe the structure of collaboration will or should support a formal appeal type of system. We do believe that there needs to be an understanding and acceptance of a procedure which allows participants who feel "damaged" to get a hearing. The above definition suggests that grievance procedures need to be handled in two different arenas--in the collaborative group and in the sponsoring organizations. Members of a collaborative team are responsible first to their organizations and second to the collaborative effort; these responsibilities may, at times, conflict and promote grievances that can effectively halt the collaboration process. If we are to make progress both in our understanding of and our execution of collaboration, we must deal more openly with the problems and difficulties people bring to and experience at the collaboration table. By developing a formal plan to handle such problems, those involved in collaboration might find that grievances

addressed openly are much less of an impediment to the process than grievances discussed only in private or not at all. The entire grievance procedure suggests to those involved in collaboration that:

- a plan on procedure is needed to handle grievances
- that plan should identify who should be approached in grievance situations
- both the collaborative group and the sponsoring organization may need to be included in the plan.

Summary. We have tried to demonstrate that, to date, the problems associated with collaboration outnumber the solutions. If one accepts that as being true, then one can begin to look for ways to improve collaboration. To guide our search, we chose to view collaboration primarily as a process and to focus our attention in that area rather than in the content area. Thus, in looking for ways to strengthen and improve the collaborative process, we turned to the literature on collective bargaining. Here we found some parallels in the procedures, roles and outcomes that are set up to facilitate the resolution of issues. And, in our examination of collective bargaining through the 'eyes' of collaboration, we found mechanisms in use in collective bargaining that may well serve to improve the process of collaboration.

For some reflections on collaboration and collective bargaining, see our brief and final chapter.

Chapter V

REFLECTIONS ON COLLABORATION AND THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ANALOGY

In this final chapter, we would like to reflect briefly on the collective bargaining analogy, present some assumptions we believe came out of our discussion of collaboration, and talk a bit about the future of collaboration.

The Collective Bargaining Analogy

Some cautions were stated in our introductions to collective bargaining as a source of processes, elements and roles in collaboration. They deserve repeating here:

1. The roles of collaboration are less clearly defined than the roles in collective bargaining.
2. Collective bargaining places people in adversarial positions; collaboration may do so occasionally, but only when an issue cannot be resolved.
3. Collective bargaining is focused on a set of relatively clear-cut issues such as salary, fringe benefits, working conditions, etc.; collaboration deals with broader issues.
4. Collective bargaining primarily addresses the needs of employers and employees. Collaboration has to address the needs of multiple organizations and individuals.

Overall, we need to acknowledge that collective bargaining as a model or even as a source of procedures to promote effective collaboration won't work for everyone. The notion of some structure for negotiation, however, should have relevance for those who are attempting to make collaboration work. Collective bargaining, as presented, did not cover all situations. Indeed, no attempt was

made to insure that every situation in collaboration was known (if that is possible). Rather, the selected terms and definitions should be viewed as covering some of the major processes that we think occur in both collective bargaining and collaboration. Although they may be less viable or even absent in some collaborative efforts, there is room for them.

Collaboration needs some structure, whether formal or informal. Without structure or 'rules' by which collaborators can proceed, the highly personal aspects of collaboration can dominate the issues and accentuate or cause conflict. Rules depersonalized and often "defuse" interaction and events. Collaboration, unlike collective bargaining, has no formal or widespread rules. Having highly formalized rules that apply to all collaborative efforts could easily strangle collaboration. But it is important that collaborators recognize that the absence of structure of some sort--the absence of mechanisms like agreement, ratification, grievance procedure, and so on--can push collaboration over the edge into chaos.

Some Assumptions About Collaboration

After reflecting on our review of the literature, our own experience in collaboration, and our explication of the process vis-a-vis collective bargaining, we formed some assumptions about collaboration. Again, we have made no attempt to be complete in our list but rather have identified assumptions that appear to deserve highlighting based on our analysis.

1. Collaboration takes place on at least two levels: institutional (or organizational) and individual. Individuals from different institutions can develop collaborative relationships with or without institutional commitment, but without institutional commitment, collaboration is limited in its impact on both practice and policy.

2. There are differences in institutional/organizational missions and perspectives; these differences can inhibit or even prevent collaboration from occuring. They can also promote and enhance it when ways can be found to proceed without threatening the "bread and butter" mission of the various institutions.

3. Collaboration is too often inhibited by failure to be specific concerning the commonalities and differences among institutions/organization and/or individuals on a given issue. Clarification of both values and specific details go a long ways toward promoting common action.

4. The individual representing the institution/organization must be able to negotiate from a confident position. This does not assume that he or she will always be a chief executive officer--it does assume understanding of what the institution's values and interests are, and an ability to relate them to the broad collaborative problem area.

5. Collaborating institutions/organizations must be willing to take risks--to venture beyond the status quo in hopes of finding resolutions to problems.

6. Collaboration requires institutions to negotiate and actually modify their individual practices and standards. Parties to a collaborative effort may have to give something up or modify a position in order to reach a shared point of view for planning. The key is to understand what can be modified without damaging the basic mission of the institution and what cannot.

7. Analyzing how individuals deal with sensitive issues is an indicator of how effective collaboration is working. The extent to which it is possible and "safe" to enter discussion and debate basic institutional values and conflicts is a good operational barometer of the extent to which a group trusts one another and has learned to function without damaging anyone's institutional base.

These assumptions are, in many ways, the reasons why the process of collaboration is so important. And they reflect our concerns with

identifying viable models (such as collective bargaining) that can be adapted by collaborators to better insure successful on-going collaboration.

The Future of Collaboration

If we assume that the answer to NIE's question about whether collaboration is possible is "yes," the next question might be whether or not collaboration will last? After reviewing the problems and advice and focusing on the importance of delineating a process for collaboration, we could reach an intermittant conclusion that "maybe collaboration will last." What changes the "maybe" to "yes" is the demands associated with the difficult and different nature of the school-to-work transition for young people. Taking care of this transition is no longer a one-institution job --the problems are too great and require the attention of too many. To cite just some of the evidence recounted by Wirtz in The Boundless Resource:

- Whatever may be its various interpretations, the 20 percent youth unemployment rate--40 percent for those doubly disadvantaged by age and descent--demands attention to this youth problem.
- The education and work elements in the youth situation cannot responsibly be considered separately; most of these young people at and approaching this critical transition point are both in school and in the work force.
- more and more of them are getting more and more education and mixing it with more and more work experience.
- There is work to be done by youth; it is emerging increasingly as work with particular characteristics--distinguishing it in material respects from the work that most adults do.

- The rising "educational attainment level of the work force" has a significant impact on what an education-work policy should be.

- There is evidence of an increasing mismatch between the development of particular competencies and the need for them, but the evidence regarding this is inadequate and the analysis incomplete.

- The answer is not just more school and more jobs for everybody under twenty, if what this means is simply staying longer in the same old classrooms and then looking for some work to relieve the extended monotony of it. (Wirtz 1975:30)

The issues raised by Wirtz are still with us. We have not seen much evidence that they will one day disappear. So, for those involved in education and work, it is indeed likely that collaboration will last. And collaboration in education and work may be the harbinger of more and different kinds of collaboration in the future.

What we believe to be critical to the success and the survival of collaboration is the process. If we are not willing to analyze and improve it--even to understand it--then there is, in our opinion, little hope for collaborative efforts. Putting people from different organizations or representing different societal sectors around the table does not guarantee collaboration. Without an appropriate process, it may guarantee failure.

As Wirtz tells us, collaboration does not mean starting one mutually-agreed upon program. There needs to be a broad issue around which there is general agreement. To address such an issue--and all of its side issues and ramifications--you must have an on-going process in place; you must know how to negotiate.

Does collaboration have a future? Yes. Will it be easy? No. Are the problems solvable? Yes, with the help of an appropriate process to support the weight of the issues that collaborators must face.

ADDENDUM

This paper is, in our opinion, a beginning. It represents one way of looking at the complexity of collaboration. It is not meant to be a definitive statement on the process of collaboration. It is designed to stimulate reaction, comment and further work in an area we consider both important and complex. The analogy we drew is an attempt to point out the complexity of bringing together persons with specific organizational and institutional identities at the collaboration table. In our opinion, we need more work--more research, more evaluation, more design, more idea papers such as this one--to support and improve the collaborative process. If we have caused you to shake your head--either vertically or horizontally--in reaction to our ideas, we would welcome your response. And, most importantly, your thoughts on the topic.

Susan Wong Rath
Rex Hagans
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